(b) and (c) At present, in the field of technical education, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has a regulation for entry and operation of foreign universities/institutions who wish to impart technical education in collaboration with Indian institutions. A legislative proposal for regulating the entry and operation of foreign educational institutions in India is under consideration of the Government.

Suicides due to fear of examinations

*34. SHRI BANWARI LAL KANCHHAL: Will the Minister of HUMAM RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether children are ending their life for fear of exams and, if so, the number of students who ended their life during 2006, 2007 and 2008, till date:

(b) whether Government has conducted any study to ascertain the reasons behind these deaths and taken any steps to overcome such unfortunate deaths and, if so, the number of complaints received and the action taken thereon;

(c) whether there is any proposal to change the present system of imparting education and conducting examination/evaluation to overcome the fear of examination; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAM RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) Reports on cases of students committing suicide have appeared in newspapers from time to time but there could be many reasons including fear of examinations, examination stress or other socio-economic or psychological factors. The data on the exact number of suicides by students due to fear of examinations is not maintained in this Ministry.

(b) The Government recognizes the need to devise measures to reduce fear of examinations among students. Although, no specific study has been conducted to ascertain the reasons behind these suicides, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) have been taking several measures to reduce the fear of examinations among students.

(c) and (d) National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005 recommends measures like reduction of curriculum load, emphasis on comprehension and application of knowledge, focus on continuous and comprehensive evaluation, emphasis on testing of competencies rather than rote memory, making examination more flexible, provision of guidance and counseling in schools, and over all, to make learning child-centric.

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has taken the following steps to reduce fear of examination:

a. Continuous and comprehensive evaluation with proper weightage to internal school based assessment,

b. The examination system has been reconstructed to test more on conceptual knowledge and understanding rather than rote memory,

c. Additional 15 minutes time is given in class X and XII examinations to enable students to read question papers thoroughly,

d. Setting up of examination help-line and making available sample question papers,

e. Designing question papers so that all the questions can be answered in 2½ hours even though the total period of examination is 3 hours,

f. Shift from content based testing to problem solving and competency based testing,

g. Higher weightage to practicals,

h. Introduction of Mathematics labs to improve conceptual understanding,

i. Providing counseling services to both students and parents through telephone, and also online,

j. Allowing students to appear in compartmental examination immediately after declaration of the result of the main examination. Five chances are given in two subjects in class X and one subject in class XII.

Importance of primary education

*35. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court, in the month of April, 2008, while dealing with issue of 27 per cent OBC reservation in higher education, did not lose sight of the importance of primary education and felt that a lot needs to be done to universalize the fundamental right to education;

(b) if so, whether in the judgment, stress has been given on primary and secondary education so that proper foundation for higher education can be effectively laid;

(c) what other main points were made in the judgment; and

(d) what steps Government proposes to take in order to fulfil the constitutional obligation of providing compulsory education to the children of 6 to 14 years?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The Supreme Court while disposing of the Writ Petition No. 265 of 2006 and a bunch of related writ Petitions challenging the vires of Article 15(5) of the Constitution and the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act, 2006, has emphasised that imparting of good quality education to all children aged six to fourteen years and regular attendance in school is necessary in order to ensure total compliance of Article 21A of the Constitution. In para 473(f) as reported in SCC 2008(5) SCALE I, the Apex Court has *inter alia* observed that:

> "Parliament should set a deadline by which time free and compulsory education will have reached every child. This must be done within six months ".